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# CRS Issue Brief

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## Radio Free Asia

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by  
Kennon H. Nakamura  
and  
Susan B. Epstein  
Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division



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## Radio Free Asia

### SUMMARY

In the FY1994 budget recommendations, the President called for the creation of a Radio Free Asia (RFA) surrogate service to broadcast to the People's Republic of China, Burma, Cambodia, North Korea, Laos, and Vietnam. He requested that Radio Free Asia be authorized and appropriated \$30 million to begin operations in FY1994 under the umbrella of the United States Information Agency (USIA).

The Administration, many Members of Congress, several broadcasting commissions, and a number of Asia-focused organizations appear to agree that the United States should increase its broadcasting to these countries. However, consensus disappeared when discussing how it should be done, where RFA should be housed, and what the tone of the broadcasts should be. Others argue that while increased broadcasting to Asia may be a good idea, the \$30 million would be better spent reducing the U.S. budget deficit.

On June 15, 1993, the President announced his proposal for a major consolidation of U.S. non-military, international broadcasting, including the creation of a new "Asian Democracy Radio." As outlined in the budget recommendation, this new radio would be housed in USIA but under a yet-to-be-created, presidentially appointed Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). The President said the proposed Asia service "would provide accurate local and international information for the people of Asia whose governments still suppress the truth."

The Foreign Relations Authorization Bill, H.R. 2333, which passed the House on June 22, 1993, contained sufficient authorization to accommodate the \$30 million RFA authorization for FY1994 and a flexible broadcasting section. The Senate version, S. 1281, which passed on Feb. 2, 1994, incorporated most of the Administration's proposal in its broadcasting section, Title III. However, unlike the Administration's proposal, it included Radio Free Asia as part of the privately incorporated RFE/RL, Inc., which would receive grants for its operations from the Federal Government. It reduced grant authorization for RFE/RL from the FY1993 level of \$220 million to \$75 million beginning in FY1996. The Senate bill also authorized up to \$22 million in any fiscal year for RFA. Strict conditions and limitations were to be placed on funding.

Ultimately, much of the debate in the Senate involved issues of journalistic independence and how to maintain it. In addition, there was consideration of how to assure budget savings and avoid the abuse of funds that some felt had occurred in RFE/RL.

The Conference on H.R. 2333, the Foreign Relations Authorization legislation, was completed Apr. 19, 1994. Conference committee considerations included the implications of the detailed Senate provisions on the institution of a Radio Free Asia service and the reorganization of U.S. international broadcasting, an important foreign policy instrument, as the United States prepares to enter the 21st century. The House passed the conference report on April 28, and the Senate passed it on Apr. 29, 1994. The President signed it into law (P.L. 103-236) on Apr. 30, 1994.

## **MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

*On Apr. 30, 1994, the President signed H.R. 2333 into law (P.L. 103-236). The conference was completed on April 19; the House passed the conference report April 28 and the Senate passed it on Apr. 29, 1994.*

*The Act provides for increased broadcasting to Asia via a new surrogate radio -- Radio Free Asia, broadcasting to the People's Republic of China, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, North Korea, Tibet, and Vietnam. The Act requires that within 90 days after the confirmation of all members of a newly-established Board of Governors, it shall submit to Congress a detailed plan on the establishment and operation of Radio Free Asia. Grants for operating expenses of Radio Free Asia may not exceed \$22 million each fiscal year; grants available for one time capital costs may not exceed \$8 million. RFA is established as a separate entity, and not part of RFE/RL. The Act also includes a sunset provision stipulating that the Board may not make grants to RFA after Sept. 30, 1998, unless the President determines that continuing RFA for one year is in the interest of the United States.*

*In addition, the Act contains provisions for reorganization of U.S. international broadcasting. Among the reorganizational changes, the act establishes a Broadcasting Board of Governors within USIA to direct and supervise all nonmilitary U.S. Government international broadcasting, make and supervise grants made to RFE/RL and Radio Free Asia, and provide for the use of U.S. Government transmitter capacity for relay of Radio Free Asia. An International Broadcasting Bureau is also established within USIA to carry out all U.S. nonmilitary international broadcasting activities. Privatization of RFE/RL should occur no later than Dec. 31, 1999. The BIB can make grants to RFE/RL until Sept. 30, 1995. Thereafter, no grant shall be made to RFE/RL unless the RFE/RL Board consists of the Board of Governors, with all RFE/RL operation policies determined by the Board.*

## **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

The Clinton Administration proposed, on June 15, 1993, two initiatives to reorganize U.S. funded non-military international broadcasting. First, by the end of FY1995, all such broadcasting -- including Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL), Radio and TV Marti, Worldnet, the Voice of America (VOA), and a new broadcast service to Asia -- would be consolidated under the umbrella of a yet-to-be-created, presidentially appointed Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) that is housed within the United States Information Agency (USIA), with a savings of \$250 million over 4 years. Second, \$30 million should be provided in FY1994 for the operation of a new "Asian Democracy Radio," first within USIA but eventually under the consolidated international broadcasting framework. This new Asian broadcast service would provide surrogate or enhanced broadcasting to the People's Republic of China, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam.

The idea of a surrogate service (an aggressive, alternative broadcasting service to a country that has a controlled media environment) to Asia is not new. Since the end of World War II, the U.S. Government supported three separate Asia surrogate or targeted broadcasting efforts -- twice during the Korean War and again during the

Vietnam War. The current interest in creating a broadcasting service to Asia began after the Chinese government's repressive response to the 1989 pro-democracy movement. The influence that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) broadcasts had on the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union encouraged those who hoped for similar changes in Asia.

## Status of Current Broadcasting to Asia

Debate regarding the nature and the need for further broadcasts to the countries proposed as targets for Radio Free Asia (RFA) is grounded in part on what is currently being broadcast (in particular U.S. Government broadcasting) to these countries. Table 1 sets out hours of broadcasting by the U.S. and other governments to the target countries of Asia.

**TABLE 1. Current Daily Official U.S. and Other Government  
Broadcasting to Target Countries**

Nation	Total U.S. and Other Govt. Broadcast Hours	USG/VOA Broadcast Hours
Burma	4 hrs. 50 min.	90 min.
Cambodia	6 hrs. 27 min.	2 hrs.
China	65 hrs. 56 min.	12 hrs.*
No. Korea	28 hrs. 57 min.	90 min.
Laos	4 hrs 24 min.	1 hr.
Vietnam	26 hrs. 15 min.	2 hrs.

\* VOA hours include Mandarin, Cantonese, and Tibetan languages.

Broadcast time, language, and program content are all important factors in determining the extent and effectiveness of alternative information reaching the target countries. The congressionally mandated Commission on Broadcasting to China reported, in September 1992, that more than 30 governments broadcast to the PRC. Of the 350 official and private broadcast hours received in that country daily, only about 15% are in Chinese. Only a small fraction of the broadcast time into the PRC is taken up by news, the preponderance of which relates to developments outside of China.

Of the various VOA Asian language services, VOA/China could be regarded as the flagship. It receives the most funding and has the largest staff, more independent news sources, and a news bureau and research office in Hong Kong. The heart of its broadcast is a 30-minute daily program broadcast twice each day called "China Focus," carrying news, information, and interviews on key issues affecting China and Chinese cultural affairs. A second program, "Window on the World," broadcasts for 45 minutes four times a day and carries international and regional news and features about China as it relates to the rest of the world.

The smaller VOA Asian language services have fewer available resources. VOA, for example, broadcasts one hour a day in lowland Laotian. In an average month in 1992, news stories accounted for about 35% of the program time. Another 35% dealt with feature stories on democratization, market building, and other international issues. About 9% of the time went for American music, and another 5% was for Lao music. News about Laos itself was very scarce, making up about 5-8% of a month's broadcast time.

## **The Initial Debate Over Radio Free Asia**

The Administration, many Members of Congress, several broadcasting commissions, and a number of Asia-focused organizations appeared to agree that the United States should increase its international broadcasting to Asia. In particular, the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, the President's Task Force on U.S. Government International Broadcasting, and the congressionally mandated Commission on Broadcasting to the People's Republic of China each recommended in 1991 and 1992 that U.S.-sponsored broadcasting to Asia should increase.

Others, however, argued that while increased broadcasting to Asia may be a good idea, the \$30 million would be better spent reducing the U.S. budget deficit. Once the American economic house was in order, they said, questions like Radio Free Asia could be more realistically addressed.

Between President Clinton's Feb. 17, 1993 announcement of his FY1994 budget request, when he included \$30 million for a new Radio Free Asia service under the USIA, and his June 15, 1993 announcement outlining in greater detail his broadcasting consolidation proposal, a major debate commenced among supporters of increasing broadcasting to Asia. In general, the debate divided between two basic but opposing approaches that reflected differences in both broadcast supervision and program content. One approach would have placed RFA directly under USIA, as the Administration had proposed with its budget request, or else as part of USIA's Voice of America. The broadcast would generally be an enhanced VOA-style news and culture-oriented programming to the countries of Asia. VOA, for instance, described its proposal to the China Broadcasting Commission as "targeted" broadcasts. These would include presentations of global and local news and information on ideas, events, and issues having a special significance -- because of the controlled nature of the local media -- to a targeted audience.

An opposing proposal, endorsed by some Members of Congress and the majorities of both the President's Task Force and the China Broadcasting Commission, would have placed Radio Free Asia under an organization separate from and, they believe, thereby free from the influence of, the Department of State or USIA. The broadcasting would be a single purpose "home service" or "surrogate" alternative to the controlled media of the particular countries. The broadcast service would act as if it were a local station providing the information and news that the local media would provide in a free and competitive media environment.

However, by the end of the Senate's consideration of this proposal on Jan. 25, 1994, debate regarding Radio Free Asia revolved around two points:

- How best to maintain journalistic independence, and
- How to safeguard against possible abuse of funds that some believed had occurred in the operation of RFE/RL.

## **The Consolidation Proposals and Radio Free Asia**

The House-passed version of H.R. 2333, which had been drafted prior to the Administration's detailed June 15th broadcast consolidation proposal, was flexible and gave maximum latitude to the Administration.

The Senate, acting eight months later, approved text incorporating much of the Administration's ideas on broadcast consolidation, but with far more specificity than the House. In particular, the Senate-passed bill addressed several key issues of the President's consolidation plan:

- Broadcast organization and location,
- Broadcast independence,
- Program nature and content,
- Availability of transmitters,
- Target audience impact, and
- Funding issues and start-up timing.

### **Broadcast Organization and Location**

Under the President's proposal, which was incorporated in the Senate version, the consolidation of U.S. international broadcasting would be accomplished within the next two fiscal years. An eight-member, bipartisan Board of Governors for broadcasting would be established within USIA. Six of the Board members would be appointed by the President and require Senate confirmation. The seventh member would be the Director of USIA, and the eighth member, the Director of the International Broadcasting Bureau, would serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member. The Board would oversee the operation of a new USIA International Broadcasting Bureau that would include VOA, the Office of Surrogate Broadcasting, parts of Worldnet Television, Engineering and Technical Operations, and other elements as may be required.

One of the major differences between the Administration's proposal and that passed by the Senate was that the Administration would have incorporated RFE, RL, and RFA into the Government as part of the Office of Surrogate Broadcasting, while the Senate-passed version would make these three broadcasting services part of a reconstituted, but still privately incorporated, grant-receiving RFE/RL, Inc., with headquarters located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The grants would be administered through the Office of Surrogate Broadcasting. No grants could be made to RFE/RL, Inc. and thus for RFA, however, until three conditions amending the certificate of incorporation were met:

- The Board of Directors of RFE/RL, Inc. consists of the members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors established under the legislation, and no others;



- Certain responsibilities of the Board of the Directors as specified in the legislation are stated; and
- The name of the corporation is amended to include reference to Radio Free Asia.

The new Broadcasting Board of Governors, according to the White House statement, would play an important role in determining the best mix of broadcasting functions. These functions include telling America's story to the rest of the world; reporting objective international news; providing accurate in-country news where a free press is not yet developed; and from time to time helping to transmit the U.S. Government's official views abroad.

### **Broadcast Independence**

The debate on the status of Radio Free Asia and surrogate broadcasting revolved around how best to safeguard surrogate broadcasting from undue influence by the Department of State.

Those arguing for journalistic independence believed that the Department of State, as the primary implementer of U.S. foreign policy, is usually concerned with maintaining constructive bilateral relations between the United States and other governments. Thus, they asserted that while surrogate programming is to be within the context of the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States, surrogate radio, which can be disruptive to relations, may in some cases not be viewed favorably by the State Department. From their perspective, the radios require a "firewall" of protection from State Department or USIA interference that could "water down" the tone of a program's content or possibly cancel a specific story.

The Administration argued that its proposal, which would have incorporated surrogate services within USIA under a special Broadcasting Board of Governors, contained sufficient protection from undue State Department influence. It pointed out that Section 304(b) stated that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the Director of USIA "shall respect the professional independence and integrity of the International Broadcasting Bureau and its broadcasting services" and that three protective "firewalls" were provided in the legislation. These firewalls are:

- 1) The presidential appointment, with the advice and consent of the Senate, of the Chairman and members of the Board of Governors so that each Governor would have individual political influence;
- 2) The Director of Broadcasting, who would be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the proposed International Broadcasting Bureau, would be selected by the Chairman of the Board of Governors in consultation with the Director of USIA and the concurrence of a majority of the Board. The Director of USIA would not have any greater influence beyond that of being on the Board; and
- 3) The new Board and Bureau would have their own appropriations and authorization lines within USIA's overall budget totals. If the Director of USIA believes the budget request of the new Board is too high, he does not have the authority to send it back to the Board. The Director

is to transmit the budget request to the Office of Management and Budget on behalf of the Board, although he may comment on it.

While acknowledging that these firewalls were helpful, some Senators questioned whether this protection would be sufficient. These Senators believed that RFE, RL, and RFA should not be made a part of the Government. Rather, they should be outside of the Government and part of a separate, private entity that would be financially supported by the Federal Government. They argued that the credibility of the broadcasts would suffer principally because:

- The Director of USIA would sit as a voting member of the Board of Governors and be given the responsibility of providing foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State to the Board. Thus, the Director would be in a position to influence the content of the daily broadcasts.
- Federalizing the surrogate radios would permit USIA to place Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) in management positions, as is now the case at Voice of America. FSOs, who are ultimately answerable for future assignments and promotions to the State Department or USIA, would be asked to manage surrogate broadcasts that could involve controversial material for the target country. Such conditions, it is feared, could foster self-censorship by FSO staff regardless of how well the Board of Governors operates.
- Federalizing the surrogate radios would bring into being "U.S. Government journalists," which would have neither the appearance nor the reality of journalistic independence.

The Senate-passed bill combined elements of both sides. It maintained Section 304(b) as well as the three Administration-proposed "firewalls." It also provided that the government would provide grants to a reconstituted, but still privately incorporated RFE/RL, Inc. RFE/RL was to continue broadcasting through Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty and was to commence surrogate broadcasting to Asia that would be designated as Radio Free Asia.

Because Section 307 of the Senate-passed bill required that the Board of Directors of RFE/RL, Inc. consist of Broadcasting Board of Governors members and no others, the Director of USIA, as a member of the BBG, would still be part of the Board of RFE/RL. Further, Section 310(b) states that the Director of USIA may assign employees of the Agency to RFE/RL, Inc. However, the concurrence of the RFE/RL, Inc. president would be required.

## **Program Nature and Content**

Section 308 of the Senate-passed bill authorized grants to carry out radio broadcasting to the People's Republic of China, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, North Korea, Tibet, or Vietnam. It further stated that such surrogate broadcasting service must be referred to as "Radio Free Asia."

The idea of surrogate broadcasting, however, can accommodate a wide range of broadcasting. For instance, surrogate broadcasting as practiced by RFE and RL today is vastly different from the hard-hitting surrogate broadcasting of the Cold War period. Similarly, some argued that RFA broadcasting should take into consideration the internal dynamics of the target country.

The Senate language required two functions of RFA broadcasting: to provide accurate and timely information, news, and commentary about events in the respective countries of Asia and elsewhere; and to be a forum for a variety of opinion and voices from within Asian nations whose people do not fully enjoy freedom of expression.

## **Transmitters**

The availability of transmitters will have a major impact on RFA's ability to broadcast, how quickly it begins to broadcast, and its cost. Using existing U.S. Government transmitters could save expenses and advance the start-up time. However, there are concerns as to whether available transmitters can be utilized. Because of this concern, the Senate provisions required that no grants be awarded to carry out RFA broadcasting unless the Board has submitted a detailed plan through the Director of USIA to Congress and the General Accounting Office describing, among other points:

- The manner in which RFE/RL, Inc. would operate RFA and meet the funding limitation of \$22 million in operating costs and \$8 million in one-time capital costs; and
- A statement that the authority to utilize existing transmitters has been obtained for the broadcasting of Radio Free Asia to countries or regions proposed in the plan and that existing transmitters meet the technical needs of the new service.

While VOA has the means to help implement Radio Free Asia broadcasts quickly by using VOA's current transmitters in Thailand and the Philippines, RFA program content might be limited by existing U.S. broadcast agreements with other countries, if allowed to be broadcast at all. For instance, the broadcast agreement with Thailand states that the U.S. would not broadcast programs that would undermine Thai national interests. If the Thai government believed that the nature of the Radio Free Asia broadcast could violate or had violated the agreement because it harmed Thai relations with the PRC or Vietnam, for example, Thailand could (1) not allow RFA to be broadcast from U.S. transmitters in Thailand, (2) demand that the U.S. cease such broadcasts, or (3) demand that the U.S. renegotiate the broadcasting agreements.

Some have suggested that transmitter facilities could be leased from other sources. However, others point to difficulties in the leasing proposal by suggesting that other countries would be reluctant to let a surrogate Radio Free Asia use transmitters on

their territory and that some countries are wary of even the name, Radio Free Asia. They point to the difficulty VOA had in leasing transmitters at Vladivostok and Krasnoyarsk until VOA was able to assure all concerned that the transmitters would not be used for Radio Free Asia.

Some private and religious organizations broadcasting to Asia own transmitters on U.S. territory, and it has been suggested that the Government could lease broadcast time from these organizations. As an example, Trans World Radio Pacific operates four 100 kw transmitters with four antennae from Agana, Guam. Others question, however, why an organization would want to subject its signal to possible jamming attempts when it now is able to meet its broadcasting needs without any interference.

Those concerned about the availability of transmitters also point to problems caused by increased costs of not using established Government transmitters. If transmitters could not be leased, the President's Task Force on International Broadcasting has estimated that it would cost between \$50-70 million and require several years to build a network of transmitters.

## **Audiences**

Another important consideration regarding the Radio Free Asia proposal relates to the impact on audiences. The Voice of America has a huge audience in the targeted Asian countries and a high degree of credibility. Supporters of VOA are concerned that any new Radio Free Asia broadcast would compete with VOA and the other existing foreign broadcasts for audience share if it were to broadcast into the target country at the same time as VOA. Further, there is concern that if VOA has to give up part of its transmitter time to RFA, this action would decrease the amount of VOA broadcast time to these countries.

The Senate provisions required prior notification and consultation with the appropriate congressional committees by the Broadcasting Board of Governors if were to be found that a significant reduction in VOA broadcasting to Asia would result from broadcasting the RFA service.

## **Funding Issues and Start-Up Timing**

The House-passed provisions for Radio Free Asia authorized the expenditure of up to \$30 million as requested by the Administration with no restrictions. Cost and the prevention of possible abuse of funds, however, became major elements in the Senate's consideration of the Radio Free Asia proposal. The Senate authorized up to \$22 million in grants in any fiscal year for Radio Free Asia and a one-time capital expenditure of up to \$8 million. But, the Senate placed several limitations and conditions on the expenditure of these funds. Before any grants can be awarded for Radio Free Asia broadcasts, the Broadcasting Board of Governors must submit, within 120 days of enactment of the legislation, a detailed plan to Congress and the Comptroller General of the United States which:

- Describes how RFE/RL Inc. would operate RFA within the funding limitations of this Act,

- States that authority to utilize existing transmitters has been obtained and that the transmitters meet the technical needs of RFA,
- Provides a detailed justification for the number of employees that are to be hired; indicates whether the services of other broadcasting entities will be utilized and whether those entities would be reimbursed from RFA funding, and
- Contains a certification by the BBG that RFA can be established and operated within the funding limitations provided.

Within 30 days of receipt of the plan submitted by the BBG, the Comptroller General of the United States must report to the Director of USIA and the appropriate congressional committees on whether he believes the fiscal assumptions are adequate and RFA can be operated within the fiscal limitations of this Act as described in the submitted plan.

The Senate provisions also outlined several restrictions on the use of the grant funds. The funds could not be used to pay any salary or other compensation in excess of the rates established for comparable positions under Title 5 *U.S. Code* or the foreign relations laws of the United States. The funds also could not be used for lobbying on legislation being considered by Congress or paying for first class travel for any employee or relative of an employee. Further, any contract entered into under this grant would have to specify that all obligations are assumed by RFE/RL, Inc., not the United States Government, and that funds to carry out the activities of RFE/RL, Inc. would not be available after Sept. 30, 1999. Lease agreements entered into by RFE/RL, Inc. regarding the broadcasting of RFA, to the maximum extent possible, would be assignable to the United States Government.

Within 3 years of the commencement of funding for RFA, the Broadcasting Board of Governors would have to submit to the appropriate congressional committees an effectiveness study of RFA. Among the factors that must be considered are the extent to which RFA is:

- Operating in a manner that is technically sound and cost-effective;
- Consistently meeting standards of quality and objectivity established by USIA or the Board;
- Being received by a sufficient audience to warrant its continuation;
- Being received by the target audience from other sources; and
- Serving the interests of the United States.

Finally, the legislation contained a sunset provision terminating authority to provide grants for RFA beyond Sept. 30, 1998. A one-year extension would be possible, depending upon national interest requirements.

With regard to a possible start-up time, the conference report accompanying P.L. 103-121, the Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations for FY1994, expressed support for "the Administration's initiative to enhance United States Government

supported broadcasting services to Asia." It also stated that USIA resources are included "to begin this initiative if the necessary authorization is enacted." Had the authorizing legislation provided for the creation of a Radio Free Asia as reported by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, RFA broadcasting services could have begun in FY1994. With the amendments enacted by the Senate providing grant authority to RFE/RL, Inc. to operate an RFA surrogate service, however, neither the House- nor the Senate-passed versions contained the necessary RFA authorization that was required by P.L. 103-121. Under the Senate-passed provisions, commencing funding for RFA must await amendments to the RFE/RL, Inc.'s articles of incorporation and the appointment of the Broadcasting Board of Directors, which need not be done until the end of FY1995.

### **Foreign Policy Considerations**

China, Vietnam, and North Korea have already objected to the creation of the proposed Radio Free Asia. They charge that it is an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of their countries. There is no indication of what steps those countries may take once the broadcasts commence. Beyond the possible general deterioration in relations, some other questions raised could include:

- Whether Vietnam and Laos might reduce their cooperation in the POW/MIA area;
- Whether China might react by decreasing its willingness to support U.S. initiatives in the United Nations or to address U.S. proliferation and trade concerns; and
- Whether North Korea will use RFA as an excuse to not follow through on agreements to normalize relations with South Korea and possibly try to destabilize the northeast Asia region.

Some argue, however, that China, Vietnam, and Laos have too much at stake economically to permanently damage their relations with the United States and that relations with Burma and North Korea are such that much further deterioration is not possible. Further, they state that if the leaders of these autocratic governments felt uncomfortable about the broadcasts, it would signal that the broadcasts were achieving their purpose of challenging repressive rule. Supporters of surrogate broadcasting argue that these broadcasts align the United States with the forces of change and democratization against the forces of repression.

### **LEGISLATION**

#### **P.L. 103-121, H.R. 2519**

Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY1994. Conference report supported the Administration's proposed enhanced broadcasting to Asia and stated that sufficient resources were included in the USIA section to initiate such broadcasting if the necessary authorization were enacted. Reported by the House Appropriations Committee (H.Rept. 103-157)

June 24, 1993. Passed House, amended, July 20. Passed Senate, amended, July 29. Conference report (H.Rept. 103-293) and Senate amendments passed House October 19 and 20. Passed Senate and cleared for White House on October 21. Signed into law Oct. 27, 1993.

#### **P.L. 103-236, H.R. 2333**

State Department, USIA, and Related Agencies Authorization Act, FY1994-1995. House-passed version (Sections 211-216) of H.R. 2333, provides broad statutory authority to the President to consolidate the U.S. international broadcasting effort, including the creation of a broadcast system to Asia. Subsequently introduced, S. 1281 incorporates, in most parts, the Administration's proposal for the consolidation of U.S. non-military international broadcasting. However, the surrogate radio services, including Radio Free Asia, are to be part of the privately incorporated RFE/RL, Inc. Funding for RFE and RL is authorized at \$75 million beginning in FY1996 and \$22 million for RFE in any fiscal year. Strict conditions and limitations are placed on the use of grant funds. H.R. 2333 introduced June 8, 1993; referred to Committee on Foreign Affairs. Reported to House, amended (H.Rept. 103-126), June 11. Passed House June 22, 1993. S. 1281, reported by Committee on Foreign Relations (S.Rept. 103-197) July 15, 1993. Passed Senate Feb. 2, 1994, and inserted in H.R. 2333 in lieu of the House-passed provisions. H.R. 2333 conference completed April 19; the House passed the conference report April 28; the Senate passed it on April 29. Signed into law Apr. 30, 1994.

#### **H.R. 54 (Bentley)/H.R. 143 (Cox)**

Radio Free Asia Act of 1993. Amends the Board for International Broadcasting Act of 1973 to authorize funds made available to RFE/RL to also be used for radio broadcasting -- designated as "Radio Free Asia" -- to the peoples of Asia. Expands the composition of the Board to add two additional members to be selected by the President. Authorizes \$30 million to carry out such functions in FY1994. Requires two reports, both due not later than 180 days after enactment, on (1) the feasibility of expanding broadcasting funded through the Board to the peoples of Africa and the Middle East, and (2) the implementation of the Radio Free Asia broadcasting and the feasibility of constructing a RFA transmitting facility in any State, territory, or possession, or state in free association with the United States. H.R. 54 introduced Jan. 5, 1993; referred to Committee on Foreign Affairs. H.R. 143 introduced Jan. 5, 1993; referred to Committee on Foreign Affairs.

#### **H.R. 1379 (Berman)**

International Broadcasting Act of 1993. Provides broad statutory authority and standards for the conduct of U.S. Government international broadcasting activities, including the creation of a Radio Free Asia. Provides the President with the flexibility to use U.S. international broadcasting resources to meet U.S. foreign policy needs. Abolishes the Board for International Broadcasting. Introduced Mar. 17, 1993; referred to Committee on Foreign Affairs.

#### **S. 659 (Biden)**

Radio Free Asia Act of 1993. Amends the Board for International Broadcasting Act of 1973 to authorize the Board to designate and fund an organization constituted on the model of RFE/RL Inc. to carry out radio broadcasting to designated countries; such broadcasting would be designated as "Radio Free Asia." In implementing this authorization, BIB is to consider the recommendations of the Commission on

Broadcasting to China. Increases the membership of BIB by four positions, with the chief operating executives of RFE/RL and Radio Free Asia serving in an ex officio capacity of the expanded Board. Introduced Mar. 25, 1993; referred to Committee on Foreign Relations.



/note

The Administration and many Members of Congress favor increasing U.S. broadcasting to Asian countries. Should a new Radio Free Asia service be created, and if so, what organizational structure and format would work best?

/mlhd

# FOREIGN POLICY AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

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